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THE
NEW DANGER
OF
PRESBYTERY, &c.

THE

NEW DANGER



PRESSBYTERY, 88.

T H E
N E W D A N G E R
O F
P R E S B Y T E R Y.
O R,

The *Claims* and *Practices* of Some in the
Lower-House of C O N V O C A T I O N,

Very Dangerous to the
Constitution of an *Episcopal* and
Metropolitical Church.

W I T H
An A N S W E R to the *Vindication of the Narrative*
of the Lower-House, &c. as far as concerns this
Argument.

L O N D O N:

Printed for *W. Rogers*, at the Sun against *St. Dunstan's*
Church in *Fleetstreet*. M D C C I I I.

THE NEW DANGER PRESENTED BY THE NEW DANGER

The danger of the new danger is not only a danger to the individual but a danger to the whole community. It is a danger that is not only a danger to the individual but a danger to the whole community. It is a danger that is not only a danger to the individual but a danger to the whole community.



With the new danger, the danger is not only a danger to the individual but a danger to the whole community. It is a danger that is not only a danger to the individual but a danger to the whole community. It is a danger that is not only a danger to the individual but a danger to the whole community.

One thing is certain, the danger is not only a danger to the individual but a danger to the whole community. It is a danger that is not only a danger to the individual but a danger to the whole community. It is a danger that is not only a danger to the individual but a danger to the whole community.

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T H E
N E W D A N G E R
 O F
P R E S B Y T E R Y, &c.

THE new Claims of the Lower House of Convocation to peculiar Rights and Powers of their own, independent on the Metropolitan Authority, have been so thoroughly examin'd, and the Archbishop's Right so plainly justified, both from the Nature of the Constitution, and from Ancient Practice and Usage, that most Impartial Men that I have met with, think the Controversy at an end, would Men know when they are answered, and persuade themselves to confess a Mistake. And yet the Controversy is maintain'd with as much Heat and Confidence as ever: Which tempts very charitable Men to suspect that there is something more at the bottom, than mere Zeal for the Rights of the Lower House. For some things are so plain, that no Reason can be given why Men are not convinc'd, but because they won't: And when Men say and unsay almost in a breath, contradict themselves and each other, invent new Schemes and Hypotheses as fast as their old ones are baffled; help out lame Precedents with as lame Conjectures, with false Story and bad Reasoning; this looks as if they had form'd their Design, and agreed upon the Conclusion, before they had consider'd their Premises, or how to defend them.

Such Men, I think, should be disputed with no longer: But there is one thing remains still to be done, to open the eyes of well-meaning Men, and so prevent the Scandal which these Disputes give to the World. Some think there is no Danger to the Constitution, from the Claims of the Lower House, but that all the Danger is on the other side; and therefore if Precedents be not so full and plain as they could wish them, yet they are sure Reason is for them; and it is time to help out old Precedents with new Comments, or to take Courage at a lucky Juncture to make new Precedents.

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Others

Others think the whole Dispute very trifling, and that it matters not which way soever it be determin'd; and therefore make very sharp Reflections upon the Contentious Humour of the Clergy, to quarrel about nothing; and think both Houses of Convocation equally to be blam'd and scorn'd for it.

To vindicate therefore our Superiors in asserting and maintaining their Ancient Rights; and to do Justice to that part of the Lower Clergy in Convocation who have dissented from the Majority in these new Claims of Independance; and to satisfy those of the Clergy and Laity who are not sensible whither all this tends; it will be necessary to give a short View of the great Danger to our Constitution, and the many great Evils and Mischiefs, which such Claims, could they prevail, must inevitably bring upon us; and how vain and groundless the Fears are on the other side.

To set this Matter in a fair Light, I shall shew, what the general Tendency of these new Claims are, and what the Mischiefs of them are, or may be, if they take effect.

The Thing aim'd at, is an Independent and Coordinate Power of the Lower House of Presbyters with the Archbishop and his Suffragans in the Upper House. I need not prove this, for it is own'd; and every new Step which has been taken in the late Convocations, can serve no other end.

That is an Independent and Coordinate House, which has full Power and Authority of Acting within it self, without depending upon the Commands, Directions, or Authority of a Superior House; that can chuse its own Time of Meeting, sit as Long and as Often as they please, Adjourn themselves by their own Authority, and deny any other Authority to Prorogue them; begin what Business they please; and not only chuse their own Committees, but when they think fit, refuse to chuse Committees by the Authority of any other Person or House; excuse Absence, receive Proxies, judge of Elections, censure their own Members; and all such like Acts, which us'd to be exercis'd by the sole Authority of a House which is its own Master and Judge.

That all this has been either claim'd, or practis'd, or attempted, or offer'd at by the Lower House of Convocation, is notoriously known. They reject the Authority of the Archbishop's Schedule to prorogue them, and challenge this Authority to themselves: When the Archbishop with consent of his Brethren Prorogues the Convocation of Prelates and Clergy (according to the Tenor of the Schedule) while the Clergy are actually present in the Upper House; the Majority of them, notwithstanding that, retire to their place of Meeting, and there sit and act as a House, as no way affected by the Prorogation above. When the Schedule publish'd in Form by the Archbishop in the Upper House, is sent down (according to Custom) to be intimated to the Lower; they

Parliament

they claim a Right to sit after that, as long as they please, against any Directions that the Archbishop and Bishops shall send; and at last when they do Adjourn, they do it not by the Authority of the Schedule, but by their own. They have in consequence of this, Adjourn'd themselves to Intermediate Days, when the Upper House did not sit, which must be by their own Absolute Authority of Adjournments. If they sit on those Intermediate Days as a House, as they pretend a Right to do, they must sit as an Independent House, when there was no House sitting but themselves: For it is a Contradiction to say, that a Dependent House can hold Independent Sessions: And yet this has been the frequent practice in our late Convocations: And they assert an Authority, which they themselves have made an Argument for Intermediate Sessions; viz. an Authority to appoint Committees to sit on Intermediate Days, when neither House sits, and to give them severally their Business to do, without the Authority, or Leave, or Direction of the Archbishop and his Suffragans: Nay, when these Committees have made their Report, and obtain'd the Consent of the House, they presume to carry their Resolutions to the Upper House, for their Concurrence, Assistance, or Advice; which is as compleat a Mark of Independance on the Upper House, as to all Synodical Business, as there is between the Two Houses of Parliament, which can begin and prepare Bills for each others Concurrence. Add to these, their late Separate Applications to Her Majesty and the House of Commons, without the Consent or Knowledge of the Archbishop and Bishops: And (to compleat their Independance) the Negative they claim upon the Upper House, not only in Final Resolutions, which is readily granted, but in the whole course of Debates and Proceedings in Convocation; upon which they build a Right of refusing to consider, debate, or prepare any Matter refer'd to them by the Archbishop and Bishops, if the Majority of their own House be not inclin'd to go about it, or to do it in the Method prescrib'd. And I think it ought to be consider'd, whether a silent Connivance at such Irregular Practices and Claims, will not soon be improv'd into a Right: For we see Precedents grow very quick upon us.

They claim a Right to judge of Controverted Elections, without the Archbishop's Authority in referring such Causes to their Hearing; which is both contrary to Ancient Precedents, and to common Sense: For if the Convocation be Summon'd by the Archbishop's Writ, and all Returns made to him as President of the Synod, and his Presence, in Person or by Proxy, be absolutely necessary to make a Synod; he, at least with his Suffragans, must be the final Judge of such Elections.

They have not indeed proceeded to actual Censures, but some of the Members have shewn their good Will to it more than once; but they were sensible they had no Power to execute any Censures; they could

neither send to the Tower, nor Suspend, nor Excommunicate; which made such Threatnings end in a Jest.

In a former Convocation, the Prolocutor with Consent of the House granted Leave of Absence to such of their Members as thought fit to desire it, without asking Leave of the President: They are willing to qualify that now, and to make the Leave of the President, and of the Lower House, both necessary to a Regular Absence; which asserts a Coordinate Power in both, that the Archbishop cannot grant Leave without the Prolocutor, no more than the Prolocutor without the Archbishop. Which is very strange, when the Clergy of the Lower House are summon'd to appear before the Archbishop, who has the Power of Preconization, and the sole Authority to pronounce the Absent Contumacious, and to reserve the Punishment of Contumacy to himself; and it is very natural to think, that the Power of granting Leave for Absence should be wholly in him, who has the sole Power of punishing a Contumacious Absence. The admitting Proxies is of the same nature, being a Branch of the same Power which dispenses with Absence, for it dispenses with Personal Attendance, by admitting a Proxy.

Some of these Instances may be thought of no great consequence one way or t'other, and not worth contending for on either side; of which more presently: But the Superior Authority of the Archbishop and his Suffragans, is of the last consequence; and every diminution of it alters so far the Constitution, and makes way for more and greater Innovations. That a House of Presbyters, however they came to be a House, has no *Inherent* and *Original* Right to such a Coordinate Power with the Metropolitan and his Suffragans in Convocation, has been well observ'd and prov'd in some late Books. That such Claims as these, in every branch of them, are a direct Contradiction to the Ancient Constitution and Usages of *English Synods*, is I think proved beyond all reasonable doubt, in a late Treatise, entituled, *Synodus Anglicana*. And therefore waving these Matters at present, I shall confine my self to the Consideration of the dangerous Tendency of these Claims of the Lower House to a Coordinate Power, with relation to the Constitution of an Episcopal and Metropolitan Church: And shall then shew the intolerable Mischiefs which would probably attend the Practice of these Claims in particular, should they so far obtain, as to be the standing Rules of Convocation.

First then, I observe, how dangerous these Claims of the Lower House to a Coordinate Power with the Upper House in Convocation, are to Episcopacy it self, to the Essential Distinction of Order between Bishops and Presbyters; for these unavoidably introduce a Presbyterian Parity into the Government of the Church.

The New Danger of Presbytery.

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I know, those Learn'd and Reverend Persons, who are such Zealous Assertors of these new Claims, take it very ill to be suspected of any Design against Episcopacy; and we are bound to believe (as I in my Conscience do) that directly they have none, because they have so solemnly profess'd, in a late Address to the Upper House, the great Honour and Esteem they have always had for the Order, and the just Rights of it. But the *Intention of the Person* is one thing, and the *Tendency of his Principles* another: The first is in every man's own Breast, and can be known only to himself; but the second lays open to the Examination and Judgment of all others: And if Principles have really an ill Tendency, they become not the more innocent, by the Author's professions that his *Intention* was so. On the contrary, a show of Integrity in broaching and maintaining false and pernicious Principles, makes them more dangerous, as gaining them more Credit: And when it is thus, an Examination becomes the more necessary, to set a Mark upon them, and prevent the future Mischief they may do in the World.

This is the Case between the *Assertors* of these new Claims, and the *Opposers* of them in Convocation. The Archbishop and Bishops, and those of the Clergy who have asserted their Authority, have all along alleg'd and prov'd that the Claims of the Majority of the Lower House are not only against the Nature and Practice of an *English Convocation*, but also destructive of the Ancient Episcopal and Metropolitcal Rights: But they have never enquir'd, nor is at all material to know, Whether the Managers of these Claims *saw* and *design'd* the Consequences that attend them. Be their Meaning what it will, it is manifest that their Principles and Practices immediately tend to lower the Authority of the Metropolitan and his Suffragans, and to make themselves an Independent House; and they use the * same Arguments and Methods for these Ends, that the Puritans did in Q. Elizabeth's time, and the Scotch Presbyterians in the Reign of K. James the First. And Men of Sense and Learning should not only consider what they themselves *intend*, but what Use may naturally be made of what they do, whatever their own Intentions be.

To make all Men sensible of this, I must observe that the great Dispute between Presbytery and Episcopacy, is not about a mere Imparity of Degree, but an Imparity of Order. The Patrons of Presbytery will allow of an Imparity of Degrees in the same Order, and appropriate peculiar Acts of Authority and Jurisdiction to such Degrees. I never heard them scruple the Name or Office of a *Superintendent*, nor Mr. Baxter's *Parochial Bishops*, with a Presbytery of subject Curates under them. They make no scruple to chuse a Prolocutor, Moderator, or President of their Assemblies, with as much Authority as a * late Author allows the Archbishop as Pre-

* See Letter A, from the Borders of Scotland; and Letter B, in Answer to it.

* Power of the Lower House, p.

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ident of his Provincial Synod: Nay, they would not dispute with Bishops meerly for the Authority of Confirmation and Orders, which the Catholick Church has reserv'd to them; or else that Dispute *de sententiâ Hieronymi*, which has been managed with so much Art and Zeal, was all to no purpose; for St. Hierom did reserve Orders to the Bishops; and yet Blondell and others have taken great Pains to graft a *Presbyterian Parity* on it; which supposes that a *Parity of Order* may admit of peculiar *Acts* and different *Degrees* of Power.

But these Learned Men very well understood the distinction between different *Degrees* in the same Order, and different Orders in a regular Superiority and Subjection, which does not consist so much in some Peculiar Acts and Offices, that one Order can perform, and the other cannot; these are only Two, *Confirmation*, and *Orders*; but then the *Authority* is *toto genere* different: The Original and Supreme Authority of all Ecclesiastical Offices, derived from Christ and his Apostles, is in the Bishops; and by Apostolical Institution also, excepting *Confirmation* and the Power of *Orders*, communicated to Presbyters, to be exercis'd under their Inspection and Government. This secures the supreme Government of the Church to Bishops, the Original Authority being theirs; and Presbyters having no Authority, but what is deriv'd from them, and under their Direction and Government.

If this be true, as all Episcopal Divines of the Church of *England* must own, and I am at present concerned with none else, I need not prove, that for a House of Presbyters to pretend to an Independent and Coordinate Power with a House of Bishops in Convocation, is to destroy the distinction of Orders between Bishops and Presbyters: For how can a deriv'd and subordinate Power ever become Independent and Coordinate, without overthrowing this Divine and Apostolical Constitution; and there is an end of Episcopacy.

I readily grant (which is the principal thing I know alledged in this Cause) that notwithstanding this Subordination of Presbyters to their Bishops, Presbyters have distinct Rights of their own, independent on their Bishops: Every Parochial Priest has so; but then they are *Civil Rights*, which do not originally belong to Bishops, but are owing to the Civil Constitution, since the Church is taken into the State, and Supported and Maintained by it. Many Deans and Chapters, besides their Civil Rights, have their peculiar Jurisdictions, and some of them Exemptions from the Visitation of their Bishops; but then they have no Authority but what Presbyters are capable of exercising; and they receiv'd their Authority either from the Grants of their own Bishops, or of the Bishop of *Rome*, to whose Authority their own Bishops then submitted, and so far made it their own Act: And all this peculiar Jurisdiction, whatever it is, is exercis'd either under the Visitation of their Bishops, or in case of Exemptions (since the Pope is no longer allow'd

low'd any Authority in England) by the King, who as Supreme Head of the Church, Visits by his Commissioners when he Pleases : So that nothing of all this sets Bishops and Presbyters upon the Level of a Co-ordinate Power, as these Claims of the Lower House in Convocation certainly do.

The great Dispute, as I observ'd before, between Presbytery and Episcopacy, is not concerning some few particular Acts of Authority, but relates in general to the Authority of Government : And the highest Exercise of Ecclesiastical Authority, is in Ecclesiastical Synods, which decide the Questions of Faith and Manners, settle the Rules of Discipline, correct the Abuses and Miscarriages in Government, and, in subjection to the Civil Authority, exercise the Supreme Authority of the Church : So that a Coordinate and Independent Power in Synods, makes Presbyters as absolute Governors of the Church as Bishops are, and I believe, would satisfy the Presbyterians themselves, when the meeting of every Synod made them equal to Bishops, and gave them Authority to call them to account for their Male-Administrations.

Whether this be our Case, and whether any understanding Presbyterian would desire more, let any man judge, who considers the present Claims. A certain Author has writ a large Book, to prove the Right of the Clergy to be summon'd to Convocation, as often as a Parliament is summon'd, by virtue of the *Præmunientes* Clause in every Bishop's Writ, and to Sit as long as they Sit ; which, since the Act for a Triennial Parliament, must be every Three Years (and that is as often as any Bishop can Visit), and according to late Custom and the Exigency of Affairs, every Year, for near half a Year together : When they are met upon this Summons, they claim it as a Right from the Archbishop to chuse a Prolocutor, and to form themselves into a House ; and when they have a Prolocutor, and are a House, they challenge the Authority of Adjourning themselves, and will Sit when, as often, and as long as they please, whether the Archbishop and his Suffragans think fit to Sit or not. Now, according to this Constitution, the Archbishop and his Suffragans have no Authority to hinder the Summons of the Lower Clergy to Convocation, nor to prevent their forming into a Body, nor to put any stop to their Proceedings, whatever they attempt. And since the exercise of the highest Ecclesiastical Authority is in these Ecclesiastical Synods, where Presbyters challenge equal Rights and Powers with their Bishops, and these Synods by their frequent Meetings, may soon become the standing Government of the Church ; Let any Man shew me, should these Claims be admitted, a greater Parity among Presbyterians themselves.

Now it is too easy to foresee, how fatal these Pretences may quickly prove to Episcopacy it self : For a Coordinate Power, as I have already observ'd, necessarily destroys a Superiority of Order, and leaves nothing

nothing but a Superiority of *Degree* in the same Order, and hardly that, were all their Claims allow'd, in Ecclesiastical Synods; and yet a meer Superiority of *Degree*, can never defend Episcopacy against a powerful Faction; which can be oppos'd only by a Divine Authority.

The plain Case is this; If Bishops and Presbyters are of the same Order, they have a Parity of Order, and an Original and Inherent Right to all the Acts and Offices belonging to that Order; and with relation to their Order, have no more dependence on Bishops in the exercise of their Ministerial Offices, than one Bishop has upon another. And therefore, the reserving some peculiar Offices and Administrations, such as Confirmation and Orders, and committing the Supreme Government of the Church to them, with a superior Jurisdiction over Presbyters, who by a Parity of Order are their Equals, can be no more than an Ecclesiastical Constitution, early agreed on by the Church, for the preservation of Peace and Order, and good Government in it. Now all such meer Ecclesiastical Constitutions are in their own Nature alterable, if they are found by experience not to answer their end; that should Presbyters and People agree to vote Bishops useless and hurtful to the Church (as we know has been done, and may be done again), here is a fair Plea to justify the deposing Bishops, and the changing Episcopal Government for a Presbyterian Parity; who, by this means, would have an Original Right to exercise all the same Authority which has been so long granted to Bishops.

Indeed this is all, that the most Learn'd among the Assertors of Presbytery pretend; they do not deny, that Episcopacy was for many Ages the Establish'd Government of the Church all the Christian World over; but they pretend, that it is no *Original* Right in virtue of a *Superior Order*, but only an Ecclesiastical Constitution, agreed on for such ends and purposes, as it cannot now attain, which they think a good Reason why it may and ought to be Altered; and therefore their only care is, to allow no such Distinction between Bishops and Presbyters in the *Apostles* days, nor in the First Ages of the Christian Church, which would prove somewhat more than an Ecclesiastical Constitution; for which reason they Dispute so warmly against *Ignatius's* Epistles, and the true Antiquity of the Apostolical Canons.

The only secure Defence of Episcopacy, must be resolved into the Distinction and Superiority of *Order*, which will admit of no competition between Episcopal Authority and a Presbyterian Parity. For tho' Presbyters can do most of the same Acts which Bishops can, yet if they act by a dependent and derived Authority, and the Authority of Bishops gives Validity to their Acts, then Presbyters according to the Original Constitution of the Church cannot subsist without Episcopacy: For an *Inferior Order*, which depends on, and acts wholly by the Authority of a *Superior Order*, cannot ordinarily subsist or act without

without it ; I say, *Ordinarily* ; for what allowances God may make for extraordinary Cases is of another Consideration. But to assert such a Distinction of Order, Presbyters whether Single or in a Body, must quit all pretences to an Independent and Coordinate Power : For a Coordinate Power must be in the same Order, and an Independent Power in an Independent Order. This is an evident Proof, that these new Claims of an Independent and Coordinate Power in the Lower House, undermine the true Foundation of Episcopacy : For there is no Sense in them, without reducing Bishops and Presbyters to a Parity of Order ; and that is an easy step, whenever they please, to a Parity of Power and Jurisdiction.

Secondly, I need not prove, that these new Claims of the Lower House directly oppose the *Metropolitanical* Authority ; for this they professedly do, and endeavour to justify. The Zealous Writers in this Cause take all opportunities to lessen the Metropolitanical Power ; as has been particularly shewn in the * *Occasional Letter*. At first, they seem'd sensible that it was the Ancient Metropolitan Right to Prorogue as well as to Convene the Provincial Synod : And therefore to prevent the like Claims of our Metropolitan, they divest him of this Ecclesiastical Authority, by the Act of Submission, and make him only the King's *Minister* in summoning the Convocation ; but in this they have been so effectually confuted, that sure we ought to hear no more of it : And therefore the next thing to be done, was to question, Whether the sole Power of Prorogations were an Ancient Branch of the Metropolitanical Authority. There is no notice taken of this in the *Acts* of these Synods, and therefore they suppose there was no such thing : But is it not more reasonable to suppose that it was such a known Right of the Metropolitan who convened the Synod, and presided in it, that there was no reason expressly to mention it ; especially since there is no other Authority taken notice of, by which the Synod was prorogued ?

They will indeed allow, That the Metropolitan did anciently Prorogue the Synod, but not by his sole Authority, but by the Consent of his Comprovincials. And a Zealous Member in a solemn Debate, of this Matter in the Lower House, undertook to prove this from the Council of *Trent* ; where the Question being debated, Whether Metropolitans had Authority to Prorogue the Synod without the Consent of their Suffragans, it was determin'd against them ; from whence he concluded, that in the judgment of this Council, they never had this Power. Now I should conclude quite otherwise, That if this Power had never before been heard of, or practis'd by Metropolitans, it would never have been made a question, nor have been so formally determin'd. To confirm this, he added, That had this Authority of Prorogations been the ancient Right of Metropolitans, the Pope would certainly

have restored it to them, it being his Interest to make the Metropolitans as great as he could, that by their Authority he might more easily govern their Comprovincials. This was thought very surprizing to be said in so Learned an Assembly, where I can't think there was any one Member, not excepting him that spoke it, but very well knew that the Papal Power was rais'd upon the Ruins of the Metropolitcal Power, and made daily Inroachments on it. For this reason the Pope chose to make some of the Chief Metropolitans his *Legates*, to confound the Metropolitcal and Legatine Powers, that the Ancient Rights of Metropolitans might in time be forgot, and thought his Gift : And this has so far taken effect, that a late Writer in this Cause has ascribed the ordinary Metropolitcal Authority of the Archbishop to his *Legatine* Power. And it is a common Answer to the Argument from the Metropolitan's Power, That we know not what he did as Metropolitan, and what as the Pope's Legate. But had it been the Pope's Inclination to *Advance* Metropolitans, can any one think that he could not have carry'd such a Point in the Council of *Trent*, which did much greater things for him?

However, they say this is own'd of our Metropolitan in the Acts of the Upper House, where these Prorogations are said to be made *cum Consensu Fratrum* : And I think there is no doubt but the Archbishop before he signs the Schedule of Prorogation, will on course ask his Suffragans whether they have any thing else to propose that Session, before he Prorogues the Synod; and what Day they think most convenient for the next Session : Common Civility and Respect requires this. But *Consent* and *Authority* are two things ; and therefore though the Archbishop leaves it upon Record in the Publick Acts, with what Deference he treats his Suffragans, yet the Schedule of Prorogation is in his own Name and by his own Authority ; which shews where the Power is lodg'd ; which therefore he often exercises when none of the Suffragans are present ; and it was never disputed whether such *single* Exercise of his Authority was Legal and Regular.

But suppose the Consent of his Suffragans were necessary to give Authority to the Archbishop's Prorogations ; what is this to the Lower House of Presbyters ? Are they his *Fratres & Suffraganei* too ? It is a transparent Fallacy to argue from the Authority of Synods, when none but Bishops were admitted to Sit and Vote there, to the Authority of Presbyters, where they were, within a few Centuries, out of mere Grace and Favour received into Synods. Bishops have an *Inherent* and *Original* Right of Government, though it may be regulated by Ecclesiastical Laws for the good Order and Government of the Church : And therefore should it appear that the Metropolitan could not Prorogue or Adjourn the Synod by his sole Authority without the Consent of his Suffragans, it would only prove that they had not parted with their

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Authority to him : But Presbyters, who have no Original Right to Sit and Vote in Synods, cannot prove such an Authority by their mere Admission into Synods; unless they are receiv'd into Synods in the capacity of Bishops, and invested with an equal Power. If they sit in Convocation as mere Presbyters (as the distinction of the *Upper* and *Lower* House proves), they are not Suffragans to the Metropolitan, nor must they challenge the Rights and Authority of Bishops any more in Synod than out of it.

The Dispute about the Authority of the Archbishop's Schedule of Prorogation is of the same nature ; for the last Result of it is, Whether the Archbishop have Authority to Prorogue the whole Synod ? * The Nature, and Use, and Authority of the *Schedule* has been so fully Explain'd and Vindicated by a Learned Pen, from the false Glosses put upon it by the Advocates of the Lower House, that there is no occasion to say more of that Subject ; for what Answers I have hitherto met with, are nothing but Amusement.

* The *Schedule* Review'd ; and, A Commentary upon the *Schedule*.

The *Schedule* it self is pretended to be but a new thing: And a good Guesser, who never is at a loss for a new Hypothesis at a dead lift, undertook lately to tell the Lower House the Date of the *Schedule*. The first time, he said, that a *Schedule* was us'd in the Prorogation of Synods or Councils, was in the 4th Council of *Lateran* ; from whence he supposes Archbishop *Warham* took the Example, and began that way of Prorogation by a *Schedule*. It has been shown * at large how groundless this Conjecture is : But be that as it will, what is it to the purpose ? Would he prove, that the Archbishop does not now Prorogue the whole Synod by his *Schedule*, because the Pope began this Custom in the *Lateran* Council, and Archbishop *Warham* soon after put it in practice in his Provincial Synod ? It seems a *Schedule* is an Authentick Instrument of Prorogation, which is all we desire. The Question is not, When the use of the *Schedule* began ; or how long the Archbishop has Prorogued by a *Schedule* ; but whether the Authority of Prorogation be in the Archbishop ; and whether he now Prorogues by his *Schedule* ; as he certainly does, if he Prorogues at all : For whatever he formerly did, he now Prorogues in no other manner ; and the Archbishop in his *Schedule* in express words Prorogues the whole *Provincial Synod of Prelates and Clergy, in his Scriptis*. But this is no Argument to those Men who matter not the Forms of Publick Instruments ; but when they please, expound them by their new Schemes and Hypotheses, though in contradiction to their express Words.

* See *Schedule* Review'd, Pag. 29, &c.

Well, but still the sending down of the *Schedule* to the Lower House is a new thing of a very late Date: This, I believe, is more than any man can prove, unless he

See *Reflections* upon the *Expedient*.

come with a very good Will to it ; and yet this is nothing to the purpose. If the Archbishop Prorogues the Synod by reading and signing the Schedule, this takes immediate Effect in the Upper House, where it is read and sign'd : But there must be Notice given of this in the Lower House to the Prolocutor, to *Intimate* it ; and it makes no great difference in what manner this be done, whether by sending for the Prolocutor to the Upper House to acquaint him with it, or by a Verbal Message, or by transmitting the Schedule it self, which, of the two, is the more sure and authentick Notice : The Prorogation is actually made, and there wants only a sufficient Authentick Notice to be given of it, to discharge the Clergy from their present Attendance.

But this last Point about its *immediate Effect*, is, it seems, not well agreed on by all the Friends of the Metropolitcal Power. Some think, that if the Schedule be sent down when the House is in the midst of a Debate, they may finish their Debate before the Intimation : Others allow more than this ; *viz.* that they may go upon new Business, if the House thinks fit ; and to justify this, there has been a new Notion started by the Advocates for the Lower House Claims, that the intention of the Schedule is only to appoint Synodical Days ; but on Synodical Days, it matters not when the Archbishop prorogues, and the Upper House rises ; for the Lower House (they say) may Sit as long as they please ; till 12 at Night, if they like it ; and on any other intermediate Days also, though not as a Synod. And thus the Committee of the Lower House concluded an Accommodation, such as it is ; That such Forms of Prorogations (as they had agreed on) should be pronounced by the Prolocutor, when the House agreed that the Business of the House was over.

I do not deny but it may be very convenient for the Lower House, to sit sometimes longer than their Parliamentary Attendance will permit the Upper House to sit ; but then I think this is a Liberty, when desired, to be granted ; but not to be taken without Leave. The Prolocutor, whose Office it is to Report all Messages according to the direction of the Archbishop and Bishops, and into whose hands the Schedule is put to be intimated to the Lower House, may be intrusted by the Archbishop with a discretional Power, not to give the Intimation, and discharge them from that Day's Attendance, till he see the Debates are over : But what is this to the new Claims of making the time of Intimation depend entirely upon the Pleasure and Authority of the House, and putting the Prolocutor wholly under their own direction, and his intimating to be only by their consent ; and their refusal to separate, tho the Archbishop and his Suffragans expressly require it ? I should be as glad as any man to see a fair and amicable End of this Difference ; but I cannot persuade my self to give up the Metropolitcal Power, which will be a *lasting and growing* Mischief, to patch up a broken Peace at present.

This,

This, I think, may satisfy any man, that these new Claims of the Lower House are a direct Opposition to the Power of the *Metropolitan*; and this alone, I suppose, is enough to be said to the true Friends of our Constitution; especially if they have any Reverence for the Ancient Constitution of the Catholick Church. The Power of Metropolitans was so ancient, that no man knows the beginning of it. They were *Ἀρχιεπίσκοποι* in the first General Council of *Nice*; and of such great Use and Necessity to preserve the Unity and Communion of the Catholick Church, and the good Order and Government of Provincial Churches, that they have been sacredly preserved ever since, wherever Episcopacy is preserved; and this is the first Attempt that ever I knew of, made by Episcopal Divines upon the Metropolitcal Authority. Take away this Authority, which may be done in one Case as well as in another, and in any Case better than in Synods, and Bishops are all Independent and Absolute in their own Diocesses; and I know no great difference between Independent Bishops and Presbyters, as to the Good Government, Peace, and Order of a National Church.

But we have a further Obligation to defend and support the *Metropolitcal* Power to the utmost; because the Defence and Security of the Church and Religion so much depends upon it. When Church and State are united in one National Body, and have mixt and interwoven Interests, Church and State must mutually support and protect each other; but then there must be such Powers lodg'd in the Church, as may make it serviceable to the State; for Power is Interest. Now by our Constitution, this Power is principally in the Metropolitan, who is next in Dignity to the Royal Family; which makes him big enough to oppose the greatest Enemies of the Church, and to make great Friends: And it may generally be observ'd, that the External Strength and Glory of the Church increases or declines, with the Interest and Authority of the Metropolitan.

What is it then, which gives the Metropolitan so great and venerable an Authority beyond any of his Suffragans? Nothing that I know of, but that he is the Centre of Ecclesiastical Unity and Power, in whom the Bishops and Clergy of his Province are closely united in a regular Subordination and Obedience: Which is so Venerable and Powerful a Body when thus united, as must give great Authority to the Metropolitan in whom they unite, and under whose Conduct they act: But destroy or weaken this Unity, which will certainly be if the Authority which unites it be destroy'd or weaken'd; divide the Bishops from the Metropolitan, and the Clergy from the Metropolitan and Bishops; make Two Independent Houses of Convocation, and sow Differences between them; and whatever Authority the Archbishop loses, is lost to the Church. Such a broken and disjoyned Body must be weak and feeble, expos'd to Contempt and Injuries, without any means

of redress. That this already has been, and is likely every day to be more the Effect of our unreasonable Divisions, is too visible to need a Proof; and I hope all the Friends of Religion, and of our Constitution, will open their Eyes to see it, and not sacrifice the Church, or that Authority which should support it, either to Ambition or private Resentments.

Thus I have shewn how these new Claims of the Lower House threaten the Subversion of Episcopacy, and of the Metropolitcal Power; which justifies the Archbishop and his Suffragans in opposing these Demands, and is a good Reason for the Episcopal Clergy to oppose them too.

But still those who are not aware of this Danger to the Constitution, think the Matter of these Disputes to be in themselves of no Consequence; and therefore it will be necessary to speak somewhat briefly to this. What they say, is, That should the Lower House be allowed to Adjourn themselves, and to Sit as long and as often as they please, even on Intermediate Days, and propose Business themselves, and Debate, and Vote, and carry up their Resolves to the Archbishop and his Suffragans for their Concurrence; what does all this signify, when they can do nothing without the Upper House, nor both Houses without the Royal License? And therefore let them Sit, and Debate, and Resolve, if they have a mind to it, till they are weary; which is a better way to cure them, than these angry Disputes. Now this (I confess) does prove that they can do no good in all this; but it does not prove that they can do no harm: The Heat and Zeal they shew in this Cause, is an Argument that they think it of mighty Consequence; and if it be so visible that no Good can come of it, common Prudence requires Governors to be aware of Mischief. It is certain the Lower House can't suffer by the denial of such Rights and Powers, as if they had them, could do them no good; and therefore they have no reason to complain; for useless Rights may be a Burthen, but no Privilege.

See a late Book
Entitul'd, *A short*
State, &c. p. 45, &c.

As for Instance. There is a strange Noise rais'd of the threatening Dangers to the very Being of Convocations, if the Archbishop has the sole Power of Proroguing them, when, and as often, and for as long a time as he pleases; for at this rate he can easily order it that they shall never Sit to do Business. Suppose this; and what difference is there between not letting them sit, and receiving no Business from them, which is his undoubted Right when he sees reason to exercise it; unless they think a long and expensive Attendance to Sit, and Debate, and Resolve, and do Nothing, such a valuable Privilege? But it is certain the Convocation is in no greater danger one way than t'other. Thus if they must rise as soon as the Schedule of Prorogation is brought to the Prolocutor, it may hinder all Business, by allowing them no Time for their Debates: Nor have they any Ecclesiastical Matters to debate, that I know of,

of, unless the Archbishop, or the Prince by him, sends them Business; and then we may be sure he will allow them Time for their Debates. The Convocation is in the Archbishop's hands, where it ought to be, and where it has been safe for many Ages, notwithstanding such Dangers as are now suggested, when there is the least reason for such Fears, that there ever was in any Age.

The Convocation indeed seems to be in some Danger at present, of being made very Useless or very Hurtful; but the Danger comes from another Quarter: These new Claims of the Lower House destroy the Ancient Essential Constitution of an *English* Synod, which is but one Body, under one Ecclesiastical Head or President; not two Independent and Coordinate Houses: And when the Unity is broke, the Seeds and Occasions of Schism and Faction are sown; and a Competition of Powers and Interests is never like to secure the Faith, and to promote the Peace and good Government of the Church. A Right to sit as long as they please, and to propose what Debates they please, without any Superior Authority to controul them, have such unseen Consequences, as time may discover when it is too late to prevent them; but the wisest Man without the Spirit of Prophecy cannot foresee.

The Lower House of Convocation consists of all the Dignify'd Clergy of the Province of *Canterbury*, of the Proctors of Chapters, and the Proctors of the Diocesan Clergy; which make a very Venerable Body, and must have a great Influence upon the rest of the Clergy and Laity too. Now it is true they can do no *Authoritative* Act without the Royal License, and the Concurrence of the Archbishop and his Suffragans; yet what a Flame may they put the whole Church and Nation into, only by their Debates and Resolves! We see of what Power a *Vote* of the House of Commons is, to influence the Nation, though it proceeds no further; and this is reason to expect that the mere Votes and Resolves of the whole Provincial Clergy may in some proportion have the like effect both on Clergy and People: And yet if they have a Right to Adjourn themselves, and to Sit when, and as long as they please, and to propose what Debates they please, there is no possible way left to prevent this.

Let us then suppose that the Spirit of Fanaticism should get the Ascendant in the Lower House (and who knows what may be, when instead of a Provincial Synod under their Metropolitan as their President, they make themselves an Independent Assembly of Divines?) what might not these men do? They might Vote the Hierarchy *Antichristian*; the Common-Prayer, *Popery*; Forms of Prayer, *Sinful*; Ceremonies, *Superstitious*, *Jewish*, or *Pagan*; and Kneeling at the Sacrament, *Idolatry*. What would not the Parliament in 1640, have given for such a Convocation; when the little Libels and Lampoons, and Seditious Preaching of Schismatics, had so great Effect, and found such Encouragement?

Indeed

Indeed it is easy to suppose very many Cases, wherein such an Independent House may bring great Disorders into the Church, and give great Disturbance to the Metropolitan and his Suffragans, and bring their Persons and Authority into Contempt. They may set on foot some Popular Designs, which the Upper House can neither safely comply with, nor reject without unjust Reproaches: And whoever reflects on the Proceedings of the late Convocations, may find too many Instances of this nature. But how reasonable and innocent soever some may think the Demands of the Lower House, and how modestly soever they should at present use their new Rights, yet the Principles on which they challenge them, are of very fatal Consequence to the Constitution of our Church. To divest the Metropolitan of all inherent Ecclesiastical Authority, and to make him only the King's Minister in calling a Convocation, is to separate the proper Ecclesiastical Power from the Episcopal and Metropolitan Office. 'Tis to take it out of the Church, and to place it wholly in the King and his Ministers, whether Civil or Ecclesiastical Persons, as he pleases; which makes the Government of the Church perfectly *Erastian*. This indeed the Papists unjustly reproach us with; but it is a new Thing to hear Episcopal Divines own and zealously assert the same Doctrine.

Having reduced the present Dispute to this plain State, Whether these new Claims of the Lower House of Convocation be consistent with the Essential Distinction of Orders between Bishops and Presbyters, and reconcilable to the Subjection which Presbyters owe their Bishops: To confirm all this, I shall briefly examine the *Vindication of the Narrative of the Lower House*, which seems written on purpose to justify themselves in this Matter, to acknowledge the Superiority of Bishops, and to reconcile their Claims with that Subjection which Presbyters owe their Bishops: And if that Author can fairly acquit himself of this, I must recant all that I have said.

He begins with stating the Authority of Bishops and the Metropolitan, and the Rights of Presbyters in the Church of *England*; which I readily grant to be exactly conformable to the Original Institution of Episcopacy in all its Essential Parts. Whether the Account which he gives of it be so or no, must now be Examined.

He tells us, *In the Reform'd Church of England, the Episcopal Order retains all that Dignity and Authority with which it was at first endow'd by Apostolick Institution, or invested afterwards by succeeding Canons, for the Dispensation of Doctrine, Administration of Discipline, and due Performance of Divine Service. The Bishops are with us the Fathers and Governors of the Church; and in them the Executive Power in ordinary is lodged. The Archiepiscopal Degree also, though we are not equally sure of its Divine Appointment, continues to enjoy in this Province of Canterbury, not only its Ancient Metropolit- cal*

cal Preeminence, but those other singular Powers which had accru'd to it, either by Right of Primacy, or Papal Delegation; and being anciently allowed, have not been since taken away by the Law of the Land. This seems to me to be a very imperfect Account of the Authority of Bishops, because it tells us not of what Nature this Authority is; on which the whole Controversy depends. The Dignity and Authority of Presbyters might have been describ'd in the very same words, That they have all that Dignity and Authority with which they were at first endow'd by Apostolick Institution, or invested afterwards by succeeding Canons, for the Dispensation of Doctrine, Administration of Discipline, and due Performance of Divine Service. From whence no Man can learn the distinction of Order between Bishops and Presbyters. It follows, *The Bishops with us are the Fathers and Governors of the Church*: Which is true, in some sense, of Presbyters as well as Bishops, and does not tell us with what Authority they govern. He adds, *In them the Executive Power in ordinary is lodg'd*: So that he wholly drops the Spiritual part of the Legislative Power in framing Canons and Constitutions for the Government of the Church: For this, as we shall hear, after the Apostles Age, he gives Presbyters as good a share in, as Bishops themselves; though he cannot but know that this contradicts the Practice of the whole Catholick Church from the Time of the Apostles, who never admitted mere Presbyters to Vote, either in Provincial or Oecumenical Councils, where all Ecclesiastical Canons and Constitutions were fram'd. And as for the *Executive* Power, he only says it is *ordinarily* lodg'd in them; which plainly distinguishes it from an Inherent Original Right, essential to the Episcopal Order and Office: For to be *ordinarily* lodg'd, signifies only a delegated Power, which in ordinary Cases they are intrusted with: And this leaves room for the Authority of Presbyters, both in the Delegation of this Power, and the extraordinary Execution of it.

Let us now consider what Authority he allows to the Metropolitan, which follows in these words: *The Archiepiscopal Degree also, though we are not equally certain of its Divine Appointment, continues to enjoy in this Province of Canterbury, not only its Ancient Metropolitick Preeminence, but those other singular Powers which had accrued to it either by Right of Primacy, or Papal Delegation; and being anciently allow'd, have not been since taken away by the Law of the Land.* He shows his good Will to the Metropolitick Authority, by that Caution he enters against its Apostolick Institution; which might have been spared, because he knows it is not pleaded in this Cause. And no Man by reading this Account, can be able to guess what this Metropolitick Authority is. He calls it, *the Ancient Metropolitick Preeminence*; which seems to intimate as if it were originally no more than an Honorary Precedence without any Authority. The next Step is, the singular Powers which accru'd by the Right

of Primacy ; but these, it seems, were confounded or swallow'd up by a Papal Delegation. And thus, whatever Acts of Authority have been formerly exercis'd by our Metropolitans, if they do not agree with the new Claims of these Men, must be rejected, not as Acts of the *Metropolitica*, but of the *Legatine* Power ; which is a very safe Retreat, and they fly to it upon all occasions. But there is another Limitation still of singular use, *and being anciently allow'd, have not been since taken away by the Law of the Land.* The Act of Submission he means ; and let but Dr. A. and his Friends have the expounding of it, and the Rights and Powers of the Lower House in Convocation will be for ever secur'd against the *Metropolitica* Authority. Now considering the true Sense of all this, I cannot but smile when I read what follows : *To all this Authority the Lower Clergy of England acknowledge themselves subject : And by this Submission they think they make good their Relation to an Episcopal Church, and are notoriously differenc'd from those of another Communion, who are Presbyters of their own naming and Creation, and acknowledging no other Order superior to themselves, are more properly stiled Presbyterians.*

I hope the Lower Clergy of England own a great deal more than his words signify ; and therefore he must confine the Lower Clergy only to the Majority of the Lower House of Convocation, who are in the same Measures and Sentiments with himself ; which I am satisfy'd the Lower Clergy of England, generally speaking, are not ; and if they were, might be *Presbyterians* for ought I know : For by his Account, they are no more oblig'd to own a Superior Order to themselves, than *Presbyterians* themselves do : And mere Episcopal Ordination does not make Episcopal Presbyters, for such our first *Presbyterians* were, who were all Ordain'd by Bishops, but lost their Relation to an Episcopal Church, when they challeng'd a Parity of Order and Power with Bishops. Whether this Author and his Friends do so, or are ever likely to do so, we may better judge by what follows.

But the Presbyters of the Church of England humbly conceive they may justly claim the Honour of being Episcopal Presbyters, though they are not so much Episcopal neither, as to surrender all the Power of the Church into the hands of the Episcopacy ; and are willing to preserve those Rights of Liberty and subordinate Authority, which unquestionably belong to them in this Re-form'd English Church, both by Divine Institution, and by Human Law.

Episcopal Presbyters, that is, those who own the Distinction of Order between Bishops and Presbyters, must own that they derive all their Authority from Bishops, and must exercise it in Subordination to them : And then I wonder what he means by Episcopal Clergy not being so Episcopal, as to surrender all the Power of the Church into the hands of the Episcopacy. For the whole Power of the Church is originally placed in their hands, and exercis'd by their Authority : And to own this, is
not

not to surrender to them any Authority which they had not, but to own what their Authority is. And I confess those are not overmuch Episcopal Presbyters, who challenge any Independent Authority. What Rights of Liberty and Subordinate Authority Presbyters enjoy by Ecclesiastical Canons and Constitutions, which are the Grants of Bishops, ought not easily to be parted with; but what those Rights and Liberties are which he means, I confess I cannot learn from his words, when he says they are such as *unquestionably belong to them in this Reform'd and English Church*. He seems to mean some peculiar Rights and Liberties which Presbyters enjoy in the Church of England, which did not formerly belong to them in the Catholick Church. And such indeed they challenge, but have never yet proved their unquestionable Right to them. But then when he adds, that these Rights and Liberties in this Reform'd and English Church, belong to them by *Divine Institution*, he ought to mean no other Rights and Liberties but what belong to Presbyters in every part of the Catholick Church, and always did belong to them; unless he can find a *Peculiar Divine Institution* for the Peculiar Liberties of English Presbyters. And as for Human Laws, no Episcopal Presbyters will pretend that they can alter that essential Superiority and Subordination between Bishops and Presbyters which is owing to a Divine Institution; which is the only Subject of our present Dispute. But we shall better guess what he means by these Rights and Liberties, by examining what follows: *For they think they are not too assuming, when they say that the Rank of Presbyters is also an Order of Christ's Appointment*. This we grant, if he will but allow that it is a Subject Order, and by Christ's Appointment to act in Dependence on, and Subordination to their Bishops. But how little he likes this, we may guess from the next words, *That they are Officers in the Church, not barely Ministerial, and whose only business it is to Obey; that to them, next after the Bishop, the Trust and Custody of Divine Truth is originally committed*. To understand this, we must remember that all this is said in opposition to their entire Dependence on, and Subjection to Bishops; and therefore must signify, that they are not mere Subject Presbyters, but have an Independent Authority of their own, Inherent in their Order by Christ's Appointment: And then we see plainly what they would be at, That there are two distinct Independent Authorities in the Church, of Christ's own Appointment. Which may, and probably will in a thousand Cases, if this Doctrine prevails, oppose and rival each other, and bring the utmost Disorder and Confusion into the Government of the Church; which for the sake of Peace and Order must end in a Presbyterian Parity. Presbyters indeed are not so wholly Ministerial as to have no Authority in the Church; but their Authority respects Christian People who are committed to their Instructions and Government, in Subordination to the Superior Authority of Bishops, to whom they themselves

are Subject and Accountable. And in this Sense we acknowledge, That to them, next after the Bishops, the *Trust and Custody of Divine Truth is originally committed*; that is, that they must Preach the Gospel, and watch against the increase and growth of Errors and Heresies which corrupt the Faith; and when this Right and Authority is denied them, they will do well to Claim it, and to challenge it by Divine Institution. And indeed by the Course of his Argument, one would think this had been denied them; though I cannot see, how denying the Power of the Lower House of Convocation to Adjourn themselves, and to hold Intermediate Sessions, infers the denial of their Authority to Preach the Gospel, or to refute Heresies; or how their Subordinate Trust and Custody of Divine Truth, proves their Power of *Adjournments*, as they love to call them. But this serves very well to make an invidious Representation of the present Controversy; and by challenging such Rights and Powers as were never denied them, to justify their new Claims to such Authority as they never had, and without which the Faith, and Worship, and Government of the Christian Church, was very safe and secure for many Ages.

What he adds, borders nearer upon their new Claims, but does not reach them; *And that they ought to have their share in the Legislation of any Post-Apostolick Ordinances of the Church.* But do they challenge this too as a Right of their Order by Christ's Appointment? It is strange then that there should be no mention of this in all the Ancient Records of the Christian Church; that for so many Ages Presbyters should never be admitted to Vote as such, in any Provincial or Oecumenical Councils, where these Ecclesiastical Constitutions were fram'd. This indeed is a peculiar Privilege which they enjoy, as he speaks, in the Reformed Church of England: But how comes the mention of this here? Has this Liberty been denied them? Do our Bishops pretend to make any Ecclesiastical Constitutions, without their Consent? Or because they are now in possession of that Right that no Canons shall be made without them, does it hence follow that they must meet in Synods when they please, and Sit and Act Independently on their Metropolitan and Bishops? He goes on in the same strain, *That the Bishops, if they please, may be as Sovereigns in the Church; and yet not absolute and despotical, but so as to suffer the Presbyters by the same figure of Speech, to be to them as the Peerage of the Ecclesiastical Constitution, the Consilarii Nati in any emergent Difficulty; and whose Consent is to be had to any new Regulation.* The Sovereigns in the Church, the Peerage in the Ecclesiastical State, is new Language in the Christian Church, and fit only for those who pretend to new Rights which the Primitive Church had no Name for. But it is a spiteful Insinuation, as if our Bishops set up for Absolute Sovereigns with a Despotick Power; which I believe no Bishops since the Apostles days ever pretended less to. That Presbyters are of Council to their Bishops

shops, and that Bishops did advise with them in their *Diocesan* Synods, no man denies; but thus it was in the Primitive Church, when Presbyters had no Authority in making Canons or judging Heresy; which shows that they thought them two very different Things, to Advise with Presbyters, and to share Powers with them. That they have been among us now for some Ages admitted into Provincial Synods, is granted on all hands; and this Liberty they enjoy to this day, and no man that I know of ever intended to deprive them of it. But their new Claims of their Power of Adjournments, and Intermediate Sessions, as far as we have any Records of *English* Convocations, they never had; and I am sure their being admitted into Provincial Synods does not prove that they ever had.

This is what was never allow'd to Presbyters in any Episcopal Church before; and as merry as he makes himself with his *Simoniackal Contract*, it is certain the King by the *Præmunientes* Clause in the Bishops Writ, summon'd 'em up to Parliament to give their Money; and when that would not take effect, commanded the Archbishop by his Writ to summon them; and for many Years they did nothing else when they came together, but give their Money; all the Affairs of the Church being transacted in Provincial Councils; which consisted of the Bishops of the Province, to which none, or very few, or very rarely, any Presbyters were called. Which does not argue any Original Right they had there, as Dr. Wake has manifestly prov'd in his Learned and Elaborate Book upon that Argument. So that this *Simoniackal Contract* (if it was so) was not made by the Bishops, as he invidiously represents it; but when the Archbishop had 'em together by the Importunity of the King's Command, he by degrees admitted them into *Ecclesiastical* Councils, and allowed of their Votes and Suffrages in Church Affairs. And they well reward the Metropolitan and his Suffragans for so Peculiar a Grace and Favour, which was never allowed any other Presbyters, by challenging an Original and Independent Authority.

As to their Right of a Negative, as he adds; I grant they had an Original Right to it, as to giving of Money; and as to Ecclesiastical Affairs, their Negative was a necessary consequence upon the Favour granted them of giving their Votes; but neither of them can be thought *Original Rights*, since no other Presbyters in the Catholick Church ever enjoy'd them; and however they came by this at first, they have it still, and no body desires the Surrender of it. But a Negative in making Canons, and coming to final Resolutions in any Matter, does not infer a Negative upon the Metropolitan's Authority in the Circumstances of Debating and Acting, particularly in the *Prorogations* and *Continuations* of the whole Convocation; which they never had, and I hope never will. This Author derives their Right of a Negative from *Diocesan* Synods; but that Presbyters ever had a Right of Negative

tive against their Bishops in Diocesan Synods, is more than they can prove. But it is certain, this neither proves their Negative nor Affirmative in *Provincial Councils*, to which they were never admitted; and therefore where he will find his Original Right of a Negative, which he says must be somewhere, I confess I cannot tell.

What follows is nothing else but a silly and spiteful Declamation, which I have much ado to forbear making some sharp Reflections on; but it comes not within the compass of my Design, which was to examine how he secured the essential Distinction of Orders between Bishops and Presbyters. He harangues about Ecclesiastical Liberty and Slavery, just as our Commonwealths-men do about Civil Liberties. To make Presbyters subject to their Bishops and Metropolitan, and not to allow them an Independent Authority in Ecclesiastical Synods, is a mere *Roman Slavery*; though they had no place in Ecclesiastical Synods in the Primitive Church, and no Church ever exempted Presbyters from the Jurisdiction of their Bishops, but the Church, or rather the Pope of *Rome*. The Liberties of the *Gallican Church* which he talks of, never pretended this, but only to deliver the King and the Bishops from that Ecclesiastical Slavery. The Alarm he gives to the Laity of the Church of *England*, of the Usurpations of the Metropolitan and his Suffragans on the Inferior Clergy; and to the Bishops, of the Usurpations of their Metropolitan; is so very senseless and ridiculous that I shall take no notice of it.

This is the Account he gives us of the Authority of the Metropolitan and Bishops, and of the Rights and Liberties of Presbyters in the Reformed Church of *England*; which is very different from the Idea of Superiority and Subjection between Bishops and Presbyters, which we find in *Ignatius* and *St. Cyprian*, and other Primitive Writers, and was religiously observed in all the first Ages of the Church. But now, *quodlibet in ecclesia*, let nothing be done without the Consent and Authority of the Bishop, as *Ignatius* taught, is no better than Ecclesiastical *Roman Slavery*, and irreconcilable with the Primitive Dignity and Powers of Presbyters. If I understand him aright, all that he says amounts to no more, but to allow Bishops some Superior Degrees of Power in the same Order, not a Superior Order which carries an Inherent Authority and Power over Presbyters; though without such an Imparity of Order, an Imparity of Power can never be defended, as necessary and essential to the Constitution and Government of the Christian Church. I have already shown that their new Claims of Liberty and Power, which the Majority of the Lower House of Convocation have made, and which this Author repeats and maintains, can never be reconcil'd with this Distinction of Order, and therefore must by degrees alter the whole Constitution of the Church of *England*. All that now remains for me to do, is, briefly to examine what he alledges in justification of these Claims and Practices.

In

In order to remove all false Constructions and Misrepresentations of their Claim, he tells us in several particulars, what Deference and Submission they pay to the Metropolitcal Authority in Convocation. But whether such an Obedience be sufficient to justify their new Claims, is to be consider'd. My great Objection against their new Claims, as I have already shown, and I think have prov'd, is this, That they make the Lower House of Convocation a distinct and separate House, with peculiar Rights and Powers, Independent on the Metropolitan and his Suffragans; which I think a House of Subject Presbyters cannot have, without destroying the essential Distinction of Order between Bishops and Presbyters, which destroys the Constitution and Unity of an Episcopal Church. Let us then examine whether all those several Acts of Obedience, which he says they pay the Metropolitcal Power, will answer this Objection.

First then, he desires his Reader would be pleas'd to observe, That when we claim a liberty of continuing to sit on, after the Prorogation made by the Archbishop, or to meet again before the time he then assign'd, this Prorogation or Continuation of the Archbishop, is what in Parliamentary Language is stiled an Adjournment; and is not a Discharge or Dismission that sends us home, but leaves us still under the obligation of attending at large, and in Town. All the liberty therefore of sitting, we speak of, is during this Attendance only; nor do we pretend to any Right of so meeting one another, until his Grace has conven'd us; nor after he shall send us home, whether he sends us by a Temporary or a Final Dismission, that is, by Prorogation strictly so called, or by Dissolution: This is the first and great Power of the Metropolitan, and we have all along profess'd our selves ready to pay all Obedience to it, as far as it may be exerted by the Law of the Land.

Now I have consider'd all this, and will plainly tell him my Observations about it. It is something indeed, that they do not pretend to an Inherent and Original Right of Convening themselves, but meet at the Archbishop's Summons, and return home when he dismisses them: Which they seem contented with, because it is conformable to their great Pattern of English Parliaments; and for more Reasons than one, they dare not stretch their Claims farther. But yet they challenge a Right of being summon'd as often as that Great Body meets. But is he sure that they do this in Obedience to the Metropolitcal Authority? I should be very glad to hear all of them own thus much, which probably would in time carry them farther. But the great Advocates of the Lower House of Convocation are plainly of another mind: They attribute their Right of Summons to the *Præmunientes* Clause, and leave the Archbishop no more Authority in Summoning the Convocation, since the Act of Submission, but as the King's Minister to execute the King's Writ for that purpose. And therefore the late Mandates sent to the Dean of St. Paul's, and to the Archdeacon of London, for the Ele-

tion of Proctors for Convocation, were accommodated to this new Notion, contrary to all former Precedents; and so new-model'd by the Inventers of that Notion, as to attribute the Summons wholly to the Authority *Regiorum Brevium*, without any mention of the *Archiepiscopal* Authority.

But suppose they did pay this Obedience to the Archbishop's Authority, yet this is not such an Act of Obedience as owns a Distinction of Order between Bishops and Presbyters, but only a Superior Degree of Power in the Metropolitan, which may be in the same Order. And so it is in this Case: For Bishops themselves, who are of the same Order with the Metropolitan, obey this Summons to Convocation, as well as the Inferior Clergy: Which shows a different Degree of Power in the same Order. And therefore it is not the mere Obedience of Presbyters to the Archbishop's Mandate to meet him in Convocation, but their Behaviour there, from whence we must take the Measures of their Duty and Obedience: But this gives very little Evidence of it.

He owns that they claim a Liberty of continuing to sit on, after the Prorogation made by the Archbishop, and of meeting again before the time he then assign'd. This, he will own, is not in obedience to the Archbishop's Authority: By whose Authority then do they continue their Sessions after the Archbishop's Prorogation, and meet and sit on Intermediate Days? Does their first Summons give them this Authority; which lasts as long as they are kept in Town to attend the Convocation? This seems to be what he aims at, in changing the Convocational Language of *Prorogations* and *Continuations*, into *Adjournments*, to make but one Session of all their Meetings, from the first opening of Convocation to their dismissal home. For if it be but one Session, as it is in Parliament, the Authority of one Summons must continue in force, and justify all their Meetings, whenever they think fit to meet, from the beginning to the end of it. And this puts the Power and Authority of Intermediate Adjournments into their own hands. Thus easily does the Change of a Word alter the whole frame of the Constitution. This Pretence has been sufficiently answer'd more than once; and they must alter all the Records of Convocation, (which make every Day's Meeting a *Session*, and speak only of *Continuations* and *Prorogations*) before they can plead it in Bar to the Archiepiscopal Authority. All that I shall take notice of, is, That this makes the Convocation two as Distinct, Separate, and Independent Houses, as the House of Lords and Commons in Parliament are; and this destroys the Distinction of Orders, and the essential Subordination of Presbyters to their Bishops; which can never be reconcil'd with such an Independent and Coordinate Power. They own their obligation to obey the Metropolitan's Authority in summoning them to Convocation, but then have done with his Authority till he pleases

to dismiss them. They own his Authority in coming to the Convocation, or departing from it, but Sit and Act there by their own. That is, in plain English, they owe him no Obedience in Convocation; but Sit and Act there, not as Subject-Presbyters, but as Equals or Rivals in Ecclesiastical Power: And this, I confess (if there were ground for it) would justify their new Claims, but is no great evidence of that Obedience and Subjection which Presbyters owe their Bishops.

Secondly, Another Instance of their Obedience to the Metropolitan, is, That as they obediently come up at the Archbishop's Summons, and go home upon his Dismissal; so in the space between (which in the Phrase of Parliament is term'd a Session), we further own our selves obliged to be found sitting, and ready for his Grace's Commands, at that time to which he has been pleas'd to Adjourn the whole Convocation. Nor are we so absurd and refractory, as to come up to wait upon the Archbishop at his Call, and then during the time we attend upon his Commands, to decline appearing at the Hour he assigns us.

Now the Question is, of what nature their Obligation is, to meet on the Archbishop's Day. If they are oblig'd by the Archbishop's Authority, it is indeed an Act of Obedience to him: But to say only, That it is absurd not to do it; is an Obligation from the Reason of Things, not from any Personal Authority to which we owe Subjection; and makes us accountable to our selves, but not to a Superior. But if it be so absurd not to be found sitting, and ready for his Grace's Commands, at the time to which he has Prorogu'd the Convocation, it must be equally absurd not to allow the Archbishop Authority to command their Attendance at that time. By what name then will they call this Authority? Is it the Authority of Proroguing and Continuing the Convocation? That they must not and will not own; for that destroys their Power of Adjournments: And yet the Archbishop gives them no other Notice of his Commands to attend on such a Day, but by the Schedule of Prorogation; which if it does not Prorogue the Lower House to that Day, it is certain cannot require their Attendance on that Day neither. Therefore as angry as he is, the Author of the *Right of the Archbishop, &c.* had Reason to say, p. 77. That none of them have acquainted us from whence their Compliance with his Grace's Day arises. He and they indeed own it absurd not to do so; but what Authority obliges them to do it, they tell us not: And if it be not in Obedience to the Archbishop's Authority, it is no Act of Obedience to him.

Thirdly, he adds, Whenever we are allow'd to sit, though we may of our own Motion complain and propose, yet we pretend not to ordain and constitute, or to redress and reform, but only to consult and agree about that which is to be offer'd to their Lordships, and submitted to their Consideration. And this is an Acknowledgment, that, by the leave of this Letter-Writer, testifies us to be Dutiful Presbyters of an Episcopal Church, who own the chief Government to

be committed to the Bishops by Christ and his Apostles, and are far from any Opposition to it, or Endeavours for Independence from it. The Sum of which is, They have no Authority to do this of themselves, without the Consent and Authority of the Upper-House, and therefore they don't pretend to do it. But thus it is also with the Upper House, who can do nothing of this nature in Convocation, without the Consent of the Lower House, who challenge the Right of a Negative. And therefore this no more testifies 'em to be Dutiful Presbyters of an Episcopal Church, who own the chief Government to be committed to the Bishops by Christ and his Apostles; than the Bishops not pretending to pass any such Synodical Acts, without the Advice and Consent of the Lower House, proves their Acknowledgment of an Equal Authority of Presbyters in Convocation. The House of Commons would not think this a good Argument to prove their Submission and Subordination to the House of Lords, That they send up their Bills to them for their Concurrence. This is nothing but what may and must be done, where the Consent of both Houses is necessary to make a Law, as well when they are Distinct and Independent Bodies, as when one House is subject and subordinate to the other. And therefore there must be other Marks whereby to judge of their Independency or Subordination, than this.

Fourthly, he adds, *We further, as to the most Reverend the Archbishop, are ready for our part (if the Bishops please) to allow to his Grace what some great Writers of ours (Dr. Field and Dr. Barrow) have not allow'd to the Office of a Metropolitan, a Negative upon the rest of the Synod, and a Legislative Key, that is, to give the Sanction to all its Ordinances.*

I shall not dispute this Point now, as not relating to my present Argument: For whatever the Authority of the Archbishop be in this Case, it is not the Authority of a Superior Order, (for it is an Authority over Bishops as well as Presbyters, who are of the same Order with the Metropolitan); but it is the Authority of a Superior Office, which they may allow the Metropolitan, without owning an Essential Superiority and Subjection of Order between Bishops and Presbyters. And yet he seems to allow this Authority to the Archbishop, to deliver themselves from the exercise of some other Branches of his Authority which they less like; and therefore he is willing to own him a King in Convocation, and to allow his Grace as much Power in Convocation as the King has in Parliament; if that may be thought enough by this Gentleman, and in reason we judge it should content him. What may content others, I cannot tell, but I assure him this does not content me. I do not like, as I observed before, a Change of Names, which introduces a Change of Power too in Convocation. The Archbishop, with respect to his Negative and Legislative Keys, which gives the Sanction, if they please to grant him this, may seem to have an Authority something like that
of

of a King in Parliament; but this is not his Convocational Name, nor the whole of his Power: His true Name and Character is the President of the whole Convocation, which includes very different Powers from that of a King in Parliament. He Directs and Presides in all their Debates; his Presence or Authority makes a House; he Appoints their several Sessions, and puts an end to them by his Prorogation, which leaves them no Authority to Adjourn themselves; and therefore they had much rather allow him to be a King, than a true and proper President in Convocation. Thus he has open'd his Design, and stated the Case under the next Head in these words: *For he is desired only to consider a Case, that shall not be to the disparagement of the Metropolitan, but suppose him to be, what the Bishop of S. declar'd him, and we as far as this Debate is concern'd, are content he should be, a King in Convocation. A Case, the Letter-Writer might have found suggested in the Narrative, and the Appendix: Whether or no in Ancient Times, when the King in full Parliament made his Proposition to the Assembly of his States, and then assign'd them a Day on which he would meet them again and receive their Answer; this their obligation to the King's Day, destroy'd their Power of Adjourning themselves in the mean while; and whether it did not leave the several States at Liberty, to begin their respective Meetings forthwith; and to Adjourn them to intermediate Days, as they should see cause; and whether even their last Adjournment to the Royal Day was not an Adjournment of their own, inasmuch as it was in their Power to have sat on longer at that time, or to have Adjourn'd to a nearer. This Case was frequent in Elder Parliaments, and holds still as good in Modern Rule: For now, I suppose, if the King shall signify to the House of Commons, That he intends to be in the House of Lords on a certain distant Day, and shall expect their Presence; such a notice will lay an Obligation on the House to be sitting that Day, but would not supersede their present, or intermediate Meetings, nor hinder the Adjournments in the mean while, from proceeding in common Form.*

The Design of all this, is to reconcile their Claims of Power and Authority to Adjourn themselves, and that to Intermediate Days, if they please, with the acknowledgment of their Obligation to be found Sitting on his Grace's Day. This has been thought a difficulty; for if they do not own the Authority of the Archbishop's Schedule to Prorogue or Continue the whole Convocation, or Provincial Synod; by what Authority are they obliged to Attend the Archbishop upon the Day appointed by the Schedule? And if they do own the Authority of the Schedule, what Authority have they to Adjourn themselves to any other Day, than what the Schedule has appointed for a new Session? To answer this Difficulty, they are forced to turn the President of the Convocation, into a King in Convocation; and to make the Schedule of Prorogation to signify no more, than the King's Message to the House of Commons, to meet him at such a day in the House of Lords; which

which does not infringe their Liberty to Adjourn themselves to Intermediate days in the mean time. Which might pass for an Answer, could they antecedently prove their Independence upon the Archbishop and his Suffragans in Convocation, and their Original Right to Adjourn themselves, and an Authority in the Archbishop distinct from his Authority of Proroguing and Continuing the whole Convocation, to demand their Attendance when he pleas'd. It is a very easy matter, and this Author is a great Artift at it, to new-model Ecclesiastical Government, in Conformity to the Pattern of the Civil Government: But Divine Apostolical Institutions are very stubborn things, which will not yield to such politick Changes; especially in its essential and fundamental Parts, such as the Subordination and Subjection of Presbyters to their Bishops, is. And certainly it much more becomes Episcopal Divines, to conform the Government of the Church to the Primitive Patterns of Church-Government, in the purest Ages; than to challenge new and unknown Rights and Powers, from their Conformity to Civil Government: And therefore how plausible soever their new Schemes may appear, from their Resemblance and Conformity to *English* Parliaments, or other Civil Assemblies; I can never concur in such new Claims of Liberty and Power, as in their natural Tendency subvert the Ancient Foundations of Ecclesiastical Discipline and Government, and introduce two Independent and Rival Powers into the Church. Especially when such new Claims are not only new with respect to the Ancient Government of the Primitive Church, but of our own; as has been evidently prov'd from the most Authentick Records of the Practices and Usages of *English* Synods. But that is not my Business at present; it is in better Hands, and there I leave it.

F I N I S.
